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US Department of State Urged to Support Ban of Mercury in Vaccines

WASHINGTON, DC, August 18, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ – **CoMeD** – On Thursday, August 18, 2011, scientists and advocates from the [Coalition for Mercury-free Drugs \(CoMeD\)](#) met with officials from the United States (US) Department of State and other government agencies. This meeting discussed the inclusion of pharmaceuticals in the upcoming [treaty negotiations in Nairobi, Kenya](#) about a [global treaty on mercury](#) being developed by the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UNEP). CoMeD had previously [expressed its gratitude](#) to see pharmaceuticals listed in “Annex C (Mercury-added product not allowed)” of the latest draft of the proposed treaty.

CoMeD, and the international coalition it leads, provided a compendium of the latest evidence for the serious danger represented by the on-going use of mercury in medicine, especially Thimerosal (49.6% mercury by weight) in vaccines as well as the continuing use of mercury-silver-amalgam fillings in dentistry. Thimerosal, [still used as a vaccine preservative and in-process sterilizing agent](#), is an unnecessary component in several vaccines, including influenza, and a sometimes-undisclosed component in other drugs. Its use has been repeatedly associated with [neurodevelopmental disorders](#), [cancer](#), [birth defects](#) and [miscarriage](#). Those harmed most by Thimerosal in vaccines are [the unborn and the newborn](#). Finally, CoMeD explained the [feasibility of using 2-phenoxyethanol](#), a much less toxic, non-bioaccumulative, cost-effective alternative to Thimerosal.

Members of CoMeD declared that, in terms of 21st Century science, medicine, law, and ethics, [mercury-based medicines and products are clearly unnecessary bioaccumulative toxic materials, and, as such, they should be immediately banned for the sake of the public health](#). CoMeD also explained that, while the US Department of State may lack the power to protect the American public by directly making pharmaceuticals mercury-free, it is within the diplomatic power of the US Department of State to recommend that, by treaty, all pharmaceuticals should be mercury-free.

In 1999, the US Public Health Service and American Academy of Pediatrics [called for Thimerosal to be removed from US Thimerosal-preserved vaccines](#) "as soon as possible". Since then, Thimerosal has been removed from most of the previously Thimerosal-preserved, US vaccines. [Dr. Mark Geier of CoMeD challenged the current inequities in the vaccines provided](#): “Children around the world, no matter their place of birth or their income level, deserve safe mercury-free vaccines. The practice of providing mercury-reduced and mercury-free vaccines to developed countries while insisting that developing nations take mercury-preserved ones is wrong.”

SOURCE Coalition for Mercury-Free Drugs (CoMeD)

RELATED LINK: <http://www.mercury-freedrugs.org>